

EDINA PARK BOARD
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2006
7:00 P.M.
EDINA COUNCIL CHAMBERS
EDINA CITY HALL

MEMBERS PRESENT: Mike Damman, Ray O'Connell, Mike Weiss, Linda Presthus,
Gordon Roland, Andy Finsness, Karla Sitek

MEMBERS ABSENT: Todd Fronek, Jeff Sorem, Jeff Johnson, George Klus

STAFF PRESENT: John Keprios, Ed MacHolda, Janet Canton, Tom Shirley

OTHERS PRESENT: Idelle Sue Longman, Jennifer Janovy

I. APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 13, 2006 PARK BOARD MINUTES

Mike Weiss MOVED TO APPROVE THE JUNE 13, 2006 PARK BOARD MINUTES. Linda Presthus SECONDED THE MOTION. MINUTES APPROVED.

II. CONCERNS OF RESIDENTS

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the City Council has asked that each Board and Commission have a standing agenda item for "Concerns of Residents". He noted that it is his recommendation that this item appear on the agenda following the "Approval of Minutes" each month. He explained that this a time for residents to have an opportunity to address the Park Board on Park and Recreation Department related issues. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the only time this would not be the case is when there are workshops, etc. The public is welcome to attend these, however, they don't necessarily have the right to participate. The Park Board agreed they would like to see the "Concerns of Residents" follow the "Approval of Minutes" on the Park Board agendas.

III. UNITED PROPERTIES DEVELOPMENT REQUEST FOR CENTENNIAL LAKES PARK LINK EASEMENT

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that they have received a formal request from United Properties asking to build a walkway between their 7601 and 7600 buildings in the south east portion of the Centennial Lakes development. He noted that this would be their third and final all-weather link between their five office buildings. Mr. Keprios explained that, although the majority of this link would be built on private property, the walkway would encroach on approximately 7 square feet of City of Edina owned park property, thus requiring an easement. Tom Shirley, Manager of Centennial Lakes Parks, showed a larger scale map of the area to the Park Board.

Ms. Presthus asked if there are any negatives associated with this to which Mr. Shirley replied not really, this is actually fairly common. Mr. Keprios asked Mr. Shirley if he supports this motion to which Mr. Shirley replied yes, he does support it.

Linda Presthus MOVED THAT PARK BOARD ACCEPT THE REQUEST FOR THE CENTENNIAL LAKES PARK LINK EASEMENT AS DESCRIBED BY TOM SHIRLEY IN THEIR AGENDA. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE MOTION.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that as his staff report indicates, this would need to be contingent upon United Properties paying all of their legal fees or any fees associated with making the easement happen. Linda Presthus ACCEPTED THE AMENDMENT THAT IT BE CONTINGENT UPON UNITED PROPERTIES PAYING ALL OF THEIR LEGAL FEES OR ANY FEES ASSOCIATED WITH MAKING THE EASEMENT HAPPEN. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE AMENDMENT.

Mr. Finsness asked Mr. Shirley what the exterior looks like to which Mr. Shirley replied that it would match all of the existing buildings that they currently have.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

IV. PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES AND SERVICES NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY

Mr. Finsness indicated that Mr. Keprios is looking for a formal action on the survey and asked if anyone had any comments regarding the survey.

Mr. MacHolda stated that the word “or” should be added to question #10, number 1, so that it reads like all of the others.

Mr. O’Connell informed the Park Board that he has read through the survey many times and thinks it addresses everything they had asked for, including the number of pages, language, etc.

Ray O’Connell MOVED TO GO FORWARD WITH ACTION WHICH WOULD BE SENT FOR A SIGNATURE BY THE MAYOR.

Mr. Keprios handed out the proposed cover letter for the Needs Assessment Survey and requested Park Board approval.

Mr. O’Connell made a motion “THAT THE EDINA PARKS AND RECREATION INTEREST AND OPINION SURVEY BE APPROVED IN ITS CURRENT WRITTEN FORM”.

MOTION FAILED FOR LACK OF SECOND.

Ms. Presthus commented that she found a couple of things that maybe should be changed to be more grammatically correct. She suggested that on #18 to change the heading to read “How supportive are you having the City of Edina spend resources to . . .” . Then

have A-F start with the word “Develop” and lastly reverse G with H because at that point it’s okay to have the last one sit different from the rest of them.

Mr. Damman informed the Park Board that Diane Plunkett Latham sent him an e-mail asking that the Park Board consider adding another question to #18 after H which would ask “If you believe that buckthorn is a problem, in which three city parks would buckthorn removal be of highest priority to you, with one being highest?” Mr. Keprios pointed out that the City did hire a professional firm that did prioritize the removal of buckthorn within Edina. Ms. Presthus commented that she thinks people would have trouble filling in the names of the parks. Mr. Keprios replied the majority of residents probably don’t know which parks do and do not have buckthorn. Ms. Presthus commented that she thinks for the every day resident to name three parks off the top of their head that have a buckthorn problem is asking them to do more than they can do without a lot more information. Ms. Sitek stated that if they’ve already had a professional firm prioritize the buckthorn wouldn’t this just be opening up a whole new can of worms?

Mr. Keprios indicated that regarding #17 he doesn’t have an issue with what Ms. Plunkett Latham is saying, it’s essentially the same thing just stated in a different way. However, he does not like the idea of the three categories; high, medium and low. He prefers to keep it the way it is with the four categories. Mr. O’Connell stated that he would prefer to leave #17 the way it is. He noted that there was a lot of discussion on the topic and this was their best solution.

Mr. Roland noted that on #18 it should be consistent where it states in the second sentence “For each action, please indicate whether you and your household are very supportive, somewhat supportive, not supportive, or not sure by circling the corresponding number. However, above #2 it says “somewhat not sure” instead of “somewhat supportive”. It would be much better if they kept it the same language. Therefore, it should read “somewhat supportive” above 2. Ms. Presthus pointed that they also need to change #3 to state “not supportive” and change #4 to read “not sure”. Mr. O’Connell stated that by changing that it would definitely make it a lot clearer. Ms. Presthus clarified that it should appear exactly the same way that it’s written in the dialog above. Mr. Weiss noted that if they are going to be consistent then #13 has the same issue; very supportive, somewhat supportive, not supportive, not sure.

Ms. Presthus asked why on #10 do they limit it to just youth? Don’t adults play softball, lacrosse, soccer, etc., to which Mr. Keprios replied that is a fair question. Mr. MacHolda suggested that they delete the word “youth” across the board on #10.

Ms. Presthus pointed out that on #7, V the word “inside” should be taken out and it should just read “Senior Center” because we all know it’s an indoor senior center.

Mr. MacHolda noted that they also want to look at A through E and eliminate the word “youth” because a lot of adults play some of the sports as well. In addition this will also stay consistent with #10. Mr. Keprios replied that he is going to take note on that and check with Mr. Vine just in case he may have a reason for that. He commented that is a very good recommendation.

Ray O'Connell MOVED TO APPROVE THE SURVEY WITH ALL PROPOSED CHANGES PLUS THE COVER LETTER. Linda Presthus SECONDED THE MOTION. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Mr. Keprios thanked the Park Board for all of their time and effort that they put into this. He noted that it's a great survey and feels it will provide powerful information that will really help them with the capital improvement plan and comprehensive plan. Ms. Presthus asked if the City Council will be going over the survey word by word to which Mr. Finsness replied no.

IV. MORNINGSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION REQUEST TO WAIVE FEE

Jennifer Janovy, Edina resident, informed the Park Board that she is on the steering committee of the Morningside Neighborhood Association to which they are a 501C4 non-profit organization that was founded in 2003. She noted that they seek to represent every property owner and resident in Morningside which consists of approximately 720 homes. Ms. Janovy explained that they don't have dues and all of their meetings are open to everyone in the neighborhood. She also added that they do have their own by-laws. Ms. Janovy indicated that they have had held several events at Weber Park to which some of them they have needed to use the warming house and have paid the rental fee. Therefore, because they are completely reliant on donations and in-kind contributions they have decided to approach the Park Board and ask if the rental fee could be waived for their annual meeting and up to two events per year in the warming house.

Mr. Finsness asked what the two events per year would be to which Ms. Janovy replied that they did not specify the two events, however, in the past they have had the "National Night Out" party held there because of rain. They have also had a City Council candidates forum, a public safety forum, a skating party during the winter, although that was held during regular open hours so that did not require a rental. Ms. Janovy pointed out that last November they wanted to use the warming house for a food drive for the food shelf but because they didn't have the funds to pay for the rental they were unable to.

Mr. Keprios gave the Park Board some background information on how he typically handles these requests to which he usually gets this request once a week. He explained that in cases where groups or individuals get free rentals or discounted rentals is because they have either donated money or given in-kind services to the city in some other form. For example, the Garden Club is not charged for the use of the greenhouse or Arneson Acres Park because of their donation towards planting and raising flowers to plant the city's 75 flower gardens. In addition, the Garden Club has contributed thousands of dollars to the city to build the gazebo, fountain and formal garden. Mr. Keprios commented that other groups whose rental fees have been waived are for those groups whose function it is to use the facility for the purpose of raising money for the City of Edina, not for their non-profit cause. He noted an example of that is they don't charge the Baseball Association to use the concession stand because all of the money that is raised through concessions goes back into the Courtney ball fields whether it's for scoreboards, batting cages, sound equipment, etc. Mr. Keprios pointed out that groups such as the Edina Historical Society are also waived any rental fees because they provide

an archival service to the city as well as historical education and preservation services and the operation of the historical museum for Edina residents. In turn, they don't pay any rent for the Terrace Room or for the use of the two historical buildings. Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that he also gives groups and individuals who rent Edina's public facilities on a real long-term contractual basis get a 10% discount for multiple rentals that are done in a type of contract form.

Mr. Keprios explained that he gets a lot of requests from non-profit organizations such as the American Cancer Society to rent facilities and they all pay the full fee. He commented that in the past the Park Board has waived fees for things like Edina's contribution toward giving money to the hurricane fund. A group of Edina kids in a band were given the use of the amphitheatre at Centennial Lakes, representative of the City of Edina, to raise money to help do hurricane relief. Mr. Keprios stated that this is the process they have followed and noted that the Park Board does have the authority to grant or not grant a waiver.

Mr. O'Connell commented that the Morningside area is a special circumstance and at one time they were a separate community from Edina but now they are part of Edina and they pay taxes in Edina and they are a non-profit group which does need to be taken into consideration.

Ms. Janovy informed the Park Board that Morningside does have a strong identity and strong desire to come together as a community and keep neighbors informed about things that are going on and getting to know their neighbors. She stated that so far it's been very positive, not only for the neighborhood, but for the city in some ways too. She explained that every year most of the money that they've raised is used to deliver flyers to every household approximately four times a year, not only inviting people to events which are free, but to also give information to residents so they can stay informed of what's happening in the community. Not everyone has internet and not everyone is involved in events that are going on in the city. Therefore, this is a way they contribute to the City of Edina.

Mr. Weiss stated that because this is a community organization and they are actively involved in trying to better the community he would be in support of it.

Ms. Presthus pointed out that she understands what is being said but if you look at the other side of this if they do approve this it will set a precedent and if Mr. Keprios is receiving these requests weekly she wouldn't want to give special consideration here. Mr. Keprios stated that he definitely is concerned to start a precedent as well as would this be a one time thing or would they forever have free use of the Weber Park building, that's the other consideration.

Ms. Presthus asked Mr. Keprios are there a lot of other neighborhood groups like this who ask for the use of facilities with the fee being waived. Mr. Keprios replied that he has received requests from neighborhood groups in the past who asked for a break in the fee to which he said no and they accepted that. Mr. Keprios pointed out that if you set precedent for one neighborhood group there are going to be a lot more groups asking for the same thing.

Ms. Janovy indicated that she realizes that Edina has their own way of doing things but pointed out that the City of St. Louis Park has a city funded and city supported neighborhood association program whereby most of their 35 neighborhoods are formally organized. She noted that one way they get support from the city is they are given free use of park facilities. Ms. Janovy explained that they call the city, fill out a form and they are able to use it. However, there are guidelines that these groups have to follow to which they need to be formally organized with by-laws and also have a method of transferring leadership from year to year. Ms. Janovy pointed out that with those two guidelines in themselves there are a lot of groups out there that will not be able to meet the criteria. Ms. Janovy suggested two more criteria be added to that which would be that all events offered are to be free of charge and secondly everyone in the neighborhood must be invited so that there is no sense of anyone being excluded.

Mr. Damman indicated that he agrees with the staff and that there should be a charge for these facilities.

Ms. Sitek stated that she thinks a neighborhood group should be able to use their neighborhood park at no charge and possibly stipulate that they have to have the criteria listed such as by-laws, transfer of leadership from year to year, no charge for events and that everyone in the neighborhood be included.

Mr. O'Connell commented that the Morningside neighborhood is a unique situation and they have cohesiveness. He noted that he doesn't want to set up a situation that makes it more difficult for the Director but feels that some consideration should be given to the Morningside neighborhood to provide a waiver for the facility. Mr. Weiss stated that he would have an issue doing it solely for the Morningside neighborhood. He commented that if they are going to do something like this they need to make it a policy with certain criteria. He indicated that he doesn't want to say that this is something that the Morningside neighborhood can do but that the Todd Park neighborhood can't. If they are going to do it, it needs to be broader.

Ms. Keprios pointed out that one thing that concerns him is at what level of service becomes free. He explained that there have been very large picnics, etc., where people have trashed the facilities. Ms. Presthus stressed that is one of the reasons why they have a fee, because it involves cleaning up, etc. They do not charge a fee just to make money, there are definite costs involved. Mr. Keprios explained that the League of Women voters rent facilities to host their events and inform the public of elections and candidates and they are charged for the rentals. Therefore, they need to be very cautious. He commented that he doesn't want to sound like the total bad guy because he loves the idea of providing neighborhood based programs and services at no charge similar to the block party concept. Mr. Keprios stated that he would be happy to study the issue and come back to the Park Board with some policy alternatives.

Mr. Keprios suggested to the Park Board that maybe they approve it this one time and ask staff to study this further and come up with a policy. Mr. Finsness commented that maybe it is worthwhile to make a motion to approve the function on October 29th and then staff could look at the different parameters of how this could work. Mr. Keprios stated that it encourages groups to use the warming houses and he's all in favor of that, however, they do need to be careful with the expense part. He explained that they can't

set themselves up to all of sudden it's free to these groups and every weekend there's another function and they have to schedule for clean-up, etc.

Mr. O'Connell asked Ms. Janovy if they leave facility in the same condition as they found it to which Ms. Janovy replied that they do pick stuff up off the floor and leave it very clean with the exception of they don't take the trash with them. They just bag it up. Ms. Janovy stressed that they are very respectful of it because in essence it's their property too because it's part of the city.

Linda Presthus MOVED THAT THEY GIVE A WAIVER TO THE MORNINGSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION FOR THE USE OF THE WEBER PARK SHELTER BUILDING FOR THEIR ANNUAL MEETING IN OCTOBER AND IN PARTICULAR DIRECT STAFF TO THINK ABOUT FORMULATING A POLICY THAT MIGHT BE WORKABLE FOR ANY FUTURE KINDS OF ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS THIS. Ray O'Connell SECONDED THE MOTION.

MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

VI. CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PLAN

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the Capital Improvement Plan will be on the October Park Board Agenda asking for action. He asked the Park Board if they had any questions or if they felt anything should be moved around. Mr. Keprios pointed out a couple of things that have fallen off of the list to which one is re-coring the current key system because there are much higher items on the priority list. However, it is a high priority to renovate the keyless entry system. He noted that they have been told that the current software is so out-of-date it may crash and they won't be able to retrieve any data. Mr. Keprios pointed out that is a big risk and they were supposed to have replaced it this year, however, they had to compromise that project as well as the Chowen Park picnic shelter in order to afford the overrun cost of the higher bids that came in on the Courtney Shelter project.

Mr. Keprios pointed out that the one big ticket item listed for 2007 is for a new athletic field with lights at Pamela Park for \$400,000. He explained that this would be a multi-purpose athletic field that would be built in a north/south orientation immediately adjacent to the senior field at Pamela Park. He commented that this is definitely a significant departure from what has been on the radar screen the past few years and added that it may or may not become controversial. Mr. Finsness asked would it be natural turf or artificial turf to which Mr. Keprios replied it would be natural turf.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board also on the CIP for 2007 is protective netting for the Pamela Park softball complex for \$50,000. He indicated that at one time the Girls Fast Pitch Association had a batting cage there but right now their highest priority is the safety of their spectators. Therefore, they are currently working on getting pricing so that they can zero in on a dollar figure for the netting.

Mr. Keprios pointed out to the Park Board that the maintenance garage at the Courtney ball fields is now listed at \$150,000 and previously it was listed at \$92,000. He explained that they have now been given some very specific dimensions, materials and amenities to

which they should be pretty close to an exact amount within the next two weeks. He commented that he is hoping it will be much closer to the \$90,000 than the currently listed \$150,000. He stated the correct amount will be in the CIP that will be in the October Park Board packet.

Mr. Keprios stated that there has been a change at Alden Park in that the amount went from \$115,000 to \$118,000. He noted that after Mr. MacHolda and the neighborhood met and came up with a design it looks like approximately \$118,000 will be needed to complete the job.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that another major change is the pathway at Garden Park which was originally scheduled for 2008. He noted that there seems to be a lot of strong interest to do it sooner. Mr. Keprios explained that by doing that they will need to delay the pathway repairs at Arneson Acres to which it has been in the same shape for decades and can certainly wait another year. Therefore, the \$30,000 that was originally scheduled for 2007 will now move to 2008.

Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that another new item on the list for 2007 is waterproofing the historical buildings at Tupa Park. He explained that the Historical Society and his staff have given him a heads up that this is a significant problem. Every time there is a big rain there is water seepage through the walls as well as the foundation of the Grange Hall. Therefore, it will cost approximately \$20,000 to fix the problem.

Mr. Keprios indicated that he is open to any comments and feedback and added that he thinks the Needs Assessment survey will help them a lot in their capital plan.

VII. UPDATES

- A. Gymnasium Construction – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that they are going to start the flooring tomorrow in both gyms and from what he has been told they are schedule to open October 1st. Mr. Keprios pointed out that the grand opening is going to be delayed until all of the school construction is done so that there will be one school/city ribbon cutting. Mr. Keprios indicated that they still anticipate to be under the original budget of approximately 5.1 million dollars.
- B. Athletic Association Meetings – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that they have scheduled a meeting with all of the athletic association presidents for Wednesday, September 27th at 6:30 pm in the Community Room. He noted that they will be going over the Core Values Document and the Relationship Document. In addition, they will also discuss their Code of Conduct as well as talk a little bit about the Capital Improvement Plan. This meeting will give the athletic associations an opportunity to discuss any comments and concerns they may have.
- C. Comprehensive Plan – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that the City is about ready to hire a consultant for the Comprehensive Plan to which they will be working with all of the departments. He noted that the Park Board can expect to see the consultant at one of their Park Board meetings. He commented that the Park Board may want to look at putting together a three person committee to work with the consultant and added that staff, of course, will do all of the leg work. Mr. Keprios

commented that they can talk more about that down the road. He pointed out that the Comprehensive Plan has to be in its final form and presented to the Met Council by the end of 2008.

VIII. OTHER

- A. Highlands Lake – Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that Highlands Lake has been a rearing pond for the DNR. However, there are now too many larger fish which has become an issue because the little walleye fry can no longer survive because they are being eaten by the larger fish. Therefore, they need to start over which means they want to kill the lake. Mr. Keprios explained that he has pamphlets on this and will be contacting the neighbors. Mr. Finsness asked is this a common thing to do to which Mr. Keprios replied yes. Mr. Keprios added that Highlands Lake has been one of the best lakes for the DNR, it has been very successful.
- B. Edina Curling Club –Mr. Keprios informed the Park Board that there is a new club in town “The Edina Curling Club” to which they will be using the new facility that’s going in at the old Midwest Health Club site. He noted that the city is going to help them out by creating a link on their website.
- C. Athletic Association Meetings - Mr. Finsness informed the Park Board that a City Council member asked him what the Park Board’s thoughts would be on each member being responsible to attend an athletic association meeting. It would be similar to how each Park Board member has taken on a few parks. He noted the reasoning is so that the Park Board can have a closer connection to the associations. Mr. Weiss responded that his feeling is if you don’t have a child in the program you’re not going to care as much and therefore he’s not sure just how productive it would be to sit in on those meetings. He noted that basically the association meetings just affect that association in and of itself. Mr. Keprios stated that in his view as long as the youth sports task force is now behind them that maybe they should have more frequent all athletic association presidents meetings. He noted that he thinks this would be a much more appropriate place and efficient use of your time to discuss Park Board level issues than to have one Park Board member attend each of the athletic association monthly meetings.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

Mike Weiss MOVED TO ADJOURN THE MEETING AT 8:10 PM. Karla Sitek SECONDED THE MOTION. MEETING ADJOURNED.